

Amendment to Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. **(Currently Amended)** A hand-portable spreader for blowing particles with an air stream for melting ice or snow, the spreader comprising:

a grip;

a storage chamber holding particles which melt ice or snow to be spread;

an air blower affixed to the top of the storage chamber for generating an air stream that carries the particles through an air conduit which has an orifice between the storage chamber and the air conduit; and

a nozzle downstream of the orifice, from which the air stream and particles shoots;

wherein the air blower has a vane impeller capable of breaking the particles into smaller particles prior to being shot out of the nozzle with the van impeller including curved vanes that impact the particles to direct the trajectory of the particles out of the nozzle, and a velocity of the air stream in the conduit is sufficient to carry the particles from the orifice to the nozzle and be shot therefrom with the air stream for depositing the particles on ice or snow to be melted.

2. (Original) The spreader according to claim 1, wherein

at least a portion of the air stream flows through the storage chamber.

3. (Original) The spreader according to claim 2, wherein

the orifice couples the storage chamber to the conduit and the portion of the air stream flows through the storage chamber and thence the orifice.

4. (Original) The spreader according to claim 3, wherein  
the orifice is generally annular and extends at least partially around the conduit.
5. (Original) The spreader according to claim 4, further comprising  
a base disposed below the grip, whereon the spreader is stably supported, and wherein  
the conduit is disposed generally vertical in a region of the orifice when the spreader is  
supported on the base.
6. (Original) The spreader according to claim 5, wherein  
an outside of the storage chamber comprises the base.
7. **(Currently Amended)** The spreader according to claim 4, wherein  
the conduit and the storage chamber are separable as a unit.
8. (Original) The spreader according to claim 1, comprising  
a base disposed below the grip, whereon the spreader is stably supported.
9. **(Currently Amended)** The spreader according to claim 1, wherein  
the air blower comprises a vane impeller capable of breaking ~~agglomerated~~ the  
particles into smaller particles prior to being shot out of the nozzle.
10. (Original) The spreader according to claim 1, comprising  
a shoulder strap.

Claim 11. Canceled.

12. (Previously Presented) The spreader according to claim 1, wherein  
the particles are salt.